

And yet he went, just like the kids who are signing up today. We've got unbelievable men and women who are saying, "I understand the stakes, and I want to go defend my country"—as volunteers. That's what happened in World War II. And it was a bloody war, and a lot of people lost their lives. It was a tough, tough fight.

I find it to be really interesting that the son of this Navy pilot is on Air Force One flying down to Memphis, Tennessee, with the Prime Minister of the former enemy, talking about peace, talking about the fact that this country of Japan has sent 1,000 troops into Iraq, because the Prime Minister Koizumi and I understand that we're involved in an ideological struggle between decent people who want to live in peace and radicals and extremists who will battle democracy in order to be able to impose their will.

We talked about North Korea and the fact that not only the North Korea—man trying to get him a nuclear weapon and how destabilizing that would be, but we mourned the fact that thousands starve inside that country. We talked about HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa and our understanding that to whom much is given, much is required; and that this great country, I assured him, would continue to take the lead in providing antiretroviral drugs to help save lives. And we talked about helping Afghanistan build up its democracy.

Isn't it amazing? My dad fought the Japanese, and I'm talking about keeping the peace. Something happened between World War II and today, and what happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. Democracies yield the peace. Liberty has got the capacity to transform an enemy into an ally. Liberty has got the capacity to transform regions of hopelessness to regions of light and hope.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down with duly elected leaders from the Middle East talking about keeping the peace, and our children and grandchildren will be better off for it.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:03 p.m. at the Mabry Banquet and Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Pam Bouchard, wife of

senatorial candidate Michael Bouchard; Saulius "Saul" Anuzis, chairman, and Holly Hughes, national committeewoman, Michigan Republican Party; former Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea.

Remarks Following Discussions With Secretary General Jakob Gijssbert "Jaap" de Hoop Scheffer of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and an Exchange With Reporters

October 27, 2006

President Bush. I'm proud to welcome the Secretary General of NATO here to the Oval Office. We've just had a fascinating discussion.

First, Mr. Secretary General, you've been a very strong leader. As a matter of fact, you've made NATO a values-based organization that is capable of dealing with the true threats of the 21st century. I appreciate your leadership. I particularly appreciate the fact that you have led the 26 nations of NATO into Afghanistan to help this young democracy. You know what I know, that the real challenge for the future is to help people of moderation and young democracies succeed in the face of threats and attacks by radicals and extremists who do not share our ideology, have kind of a dark vision of the world.

I appreciate the fact that you're reaching out to global partners, nations which share our value but have not been considered a—necessarily considered a part of NATO. I want to thank your view of making sure NATO continues to provide the opportunity for other nations to join NATO.

I'm looking forward to Riga. The Riga summit is a time for us to celebrate the great successes of this partnership. Mr. Secretary General and I will be there reminding our partners that we have a lot of work to be done in the noble cause of peace.

So, welcome.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. Mr. President, thank you very much, and thank you for giving me your time. I can echo your words. NATO is delivering security in

the 21st century. And that means defending values, and that means defending values not only in Europe but far away from NATO's traditional area. And the case in point, of course, is Afghanistan, where there was a regime which was grossly violating human rights, no women's rights, public executions. There we are trying to assist the Afghan Government to establish democracy, to establish human rights, to establish those values.

And let me say that when, in those actions of NATO, of those brave NATO soldiers, civilians are killed, as happened 2 days ago, that's always a tragedy. That's a tragedy.

But let me convince you to look at the broader picture. They are against democracy. Girls did not go to school when the Taliban was running Afghanistan. Now they go to school. Now there is a precedence. Now there is a government. Civilian victims are a tragedy, but we are there in favor of democracy. They are there to destroy democracy, and they are there to destroy our values.

Mr. President, I'm looking forward to the Riga summit, where we'll see a 21st century NATO delivering security in many, many places of the world with 50,000 soldiers, including many Americans, on three continents. That is the challenge, but I can tell you that NATO is up to the challenge. NATO is delivering security, and NATO will continue to do this, indeed, with its presence, but also with global partners, because terrorism, proliferation, failed states, and failing states are global threats we have to face and to counter on a global scale.

Mr. President, once again, thank you very much for being here.

President Bush. Yes, sir.

I'll answer a couple of questions this morning. Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press].

Iran

Q. Thank you, sir. What does it say to you that Iran is doubling its enrichment capacity?

President Bush. It says to me that we must double our effort to work with the international community to persuade the Iranians that there is only isolation from the world if they continue working forward on such a program. And I've read the speculation about that that's what they may be doing,

but whether they've doubled it or not, the idea of Iran having a nuclear weapon is unacceptable, and it's unacceptable to the United States, and it's unacceptable to nations we're working with in the United Nations—to send a common message.

Caren [Caren Bohan, Reuters].

Interrogation of Terrorists

Q. Sir, do you agree with the Vice President that a dunk in the water is a “no brainer” when it comes to interrogating a terror suspect?

President Bush. This country doesn't torture. We're not going to torture. We will interrogate people we pick up off the battlefield to determine whether or not they've got information that will be helpful to protect the country.

Keil [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

2006 Elections

Q. Mr. President, with the elections just about 10 days away, polls show that voters are more disenchanted with the Republican-led Congress than at any time since 1994, when the Democrats lost power. What explanation or answer do you have for people who feel that way?

President Bush. Keil, I understand people here in Washington have already determined the outcome of the elections. As I said in my press conference the other day, I've seen it before, where people start measuring the drapes in their new offices before the vote has been counted—in other words, they're taking the people's vote for granted.

This election is going to be determined by how our candidates run locally. And I believe if they continue to emphasize the big issues—keeping taxes low and protecting the American people—we'll win. And so we'll see how the outcome comes. I know there's a lot of speculation here in Washington, DC, and there's a lot of fascination about listening to these pundits and people who are giving their opinions.

All I can tell you is what I see: I see enthusiasm amongst Republicans; I see candidates who are saying, “Vote for me. I will work to make sure America doesn't get attacked again.” And I'm seeing candidates saying, “I understand that if we run up your taxes like

the Democrats do, it's going to hurt this economy, and so we'll keep your taxes low."

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 21

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, in the Roosevelt Room, the President met with National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley; Deputy National Security Adviser Jack D. Crouch II; State and Defense Department officials; military commanders; and Vice President Dick Cheney, who participated via video teleconference.

October 23

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. He then met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Later in the morning, in the East Room, the President participated in a photo opportunity with crew members of the Space Shuttle *Discovery*, Space Shuttle *Atlantis*, and Space Station Expeditions 11, 12, and 13. Then, on the South Portico, he and Mrs. Bush participated in a photo opportunity with King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush had lunch with the King and Queen Sweden. He then went to the Urban Trust Bank, where he participated in a discussion on the economy with small-business owners and community bankers. Later, in the Old Family Dining Room, he participated in an interview with Maria Bartiromo of CNBC, for later broadcast.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Hanoi, Vietnam, to

attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Meeting on November 18–19, to meet with President Nguyen Minh Triet and Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung of Vietnam on November 17, and that he will travel to Singapore and Indonesia.

October 24

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Sarasota, FL, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Tom Cooney.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Fort Lauderdale, FL, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer David Greenberger. He then traveled to Boca Raton, FL, where, at a private residence, he attended a Republican National Committee dinner.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on October 12–13 and continuing.

October 25

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President participated in an interview with print journalists.

October 26

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Des Moines, IA, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Sally Bates.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Clinton Township, MI, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer George Kolf. He then traveled to Warren, MI.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

October 27

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Map Room, he participated in separate interviews with